

The Church and Social Service

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OF late social service has progressed so rapidly that one is inclined to look upon this development as very recent in origin. In this paper it is my purpose to show that sociology, which treats of the actions of men living together in society and the institutions they create, is much older than most of us realize. Indeed, it is as old as society itself. Its scope embraces the whole history of man from the origin of society to its latest development. Sociology cannot escape interpretation and direction of human conduct, and hence can hardly be expected to avoid taking a very definite attitude towards the outlook of the Church on life, an outlook derived from Revelation itself. For after all, the doctrine of human brotherhood is received directly from the lips of Christ, and is set forth in Chapter XXV, vv. 34-40, of St. Matthew: "I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was a stranger and you took me in."

Whether the problem be that of the family, the relation of social classes, altruism, the modification of the forms of government, the changing of the status of woman, we may not for a moment ignore religion.

Of course some forms of social service existed among pagans, but the forms bore no proportion to their advance in civilization. Although the Greeks and Romans attained the highest degree of culture, their treatment and care of the sick was scarcely equal, certainly not superior, to that found in Oriental nations. They both considered the individual the property of the State.

In Greece, Plato taught that the State was supreme, and that children were the property of the State, to be educated by it and divided according to ability, into three classes: producers, warriors, and the governing class. Greece advocated government by the intellectuals; thus we see that a form of intelligence-testing was practised by the Greeks.

The social service of the pagans exhibited all the limitations of their defective first principles. With the Greeks and Romans, human beings had no apparent worth, and the weakling was destroyed. The individual was of importance only as a citizen. The practise of exposing to death an undesired infant was common, and very general also was infanticide. Lycurgus and the Decemviri decreed that deformed children should be killed in the interest of healthy citizenship. Aristotle advocated the passing of a law prescribing the manner of death for all children in excess of a socially useful number, and the making of abortion compulsory whenever it was thought expedient for public welfare. Our present-day advocates of birth-control are evidently finding their ideas, if not their methods, in Greek history.

The Greeks and the Romans did not have hospitals as such, but held clinics in the temples. In Greece the sick were kept in the temple all night in order that through dreams they could find out the pleasure of the gods as to their cure. The priests interpreted the dreams. This no doubt was the first attempt at psychoanalysis. Poverty and human wretchedness were looked upon as minor evils. However, the rich of Rome annually deposited large sums of money with their clients and the State distributed aid amongst its poorer citizens. The dominant motive of both was political. In Athens subvention of public money to the poor artisans was similarly restricted and directed to the same ends.

In Rome we have evidences of laws for the care and welfare of the insane but no record of putting them into effect. Pinel, the French psychiatrist, gives details of the treatment of the insane by the priests of Saturn, and this included diversion of mind, recreation, hydropathy and careful regimen, all of which is included in our modern treatment of the insane.

Hebrew social service was of a much higher order, being motivated by obedience to the law of God and genuine pity for the unfortunate. When Moses received the law written on the tablets of stone, three of the commandments pertained to the worship of God and the remaining seven to human conduct in regard to one's self and one's neighbor. For this reason the widow, the

orphan, the blind, and the lame were objects of special care among the Hebrews. The poor were permitted to gather for themselves the gleanings left in the field. The orphan shared the excess fruits of the harvest. The people were told "God is the father of orphans" and His bounty was to be shared with them. Those who lent money were forbidden to take interest from their fellow citizens or from the stranger within the land. Labor was held in honor, making the condition of the lowly much less difficult than among the pagans. Jewish social service was essentially national, as it took no account of the alien without. In the latter centuries of their existence as a nation, they departed to a great extent from these practises in regard to their neighbors.

Christ's doctrine of the brotherhood of man brought into the world ample expression, and is particularly shown in the writings of St. Paul. This doctrine embodied the abolition of any distinction between Jew and Gentile, Barbarian and Greek, bond and free. Even those who were not of the Faith were to be loved and assisted. Labor was no longer to be dishonorable, but the normal condition of livelihood. Religion clean and undefiled before God was the visiting of the fatherless and the widow in their tribulations. While the Church has special solicitude for the widow and the orphans, she was not to be burdened with those who could be supported by their relatives.

The social service of the Church centers around Christ who went to His death despised by the very creatures He created, apparently a failure; the doctrine He taught laughed at. But the little society He had founded lived and grew, and in no way has the Church put into practise more effectively Christ's doctrines than in her work for the poor, the sick and the suffering.

Not long after the death of Christ, the Church, composed of a few poor fishermen and some slaves, made Rome its center. They found there a city reeking in vice, men of wealth lustful, women measuring their years by the number of her husbands. The rulers of the Empire, fearing the little band of fishermen, drove them underground. After a few years, strengthened by added num-

bers, they came forth and found not a better city, but one filled with worse corruption.

After all the years of so called culture in the City of Rome, there was not a single real hospital or asylum for the poor and the orphans. Pity and mercy were unknown. Before many years had passed, the influence of the Church of the Catacombs began to change the atmosphere of Rome. Homes of the wealthy were converted into hospitals for the sick and into asylums for orphan children. The teachings of the greatest of sociologists, Christ, were beginning to bear fruit. When it was commanded that the treasures of the Church be brought out to the tyrants, the old, the crippled, the sick and the maimed came forth, showing the world the social service of the Church in practise.

Awakened by the deeds of the Christians, the Roman Senators erected in A. D. 179 two institutions; one for the dying and one for lying-in women. Relief agencies were established. That the Christians had hospitals before 161 A. D. is proved by the fact that the Roman Emperor sent a letter to the High Priest Arsicius of Galatia, directing him to have erected hospitals, out of the public funds, to rival those of the Christians who were caring for pagan and Christian alike.

The first hospital on record in Ireland was established in 300 B. C. and was called the "House of Sorrow," and survived until 332 A. D. This was followed by what was considered the first real sisterhood devoted to social service, which was founded in 473 A. D. by Bridgid of Ulster in Ireland, for the care of the poor.

The Fourth Council of Carthage, held about 436 A. D., enjoined upon Bishops to have hospices in connection with their church for travelers. These hospitals rivaled similar institutions of today.

Owing to the hardship of travel in those days, these hospices were built in out of the way places. The traveler could always get a night's lodging in the town, but the towns were many miles apart. The most famous hospice was that of St. Bernard in Switzerland, founded by Bernard of Menthon in 962 A. D., and is still in existence. These institutions were in charge of monks or priests and the travelers were taken care of gratuitously for a limited

period. The institutions were supported by pious foundations or by the liberality of the people. There were certain Orders, e. g., the Knights Hospitalers of St. John of Jerusalem, given to the work of charity, the duty of harboring the pilgrim being secondary only to the care of the sick. In 619 A. D. John the Almoner, Patriarch of Alexandria, held weekly discourses or social service conferences. In 770 A. D. Benedict of Anian founded hospitals for the sick, poor, and for the care of the stranger within the city.

With the advent of Christianity, we find more definite evidence of work among the insane. At the beginning of the fourth century in Constantinople, among thirty-five Christian institutions, there was the Morotrophium or home for the insane. The rule of St. Jerome enjoined the duty of caring for the mentally sick.

Prior to the Reformation, there were many general hospitals under the control of the Church which had psychopathic wards. In 630 A. D., Paulus Aegineta wrote a book on his observations of the insane while in hospitals and in their own homes. We are not a bit modern when it comes to care and social service for the mentally sick. At Gheel, Belgium, the mentally sick were removed from their homes and put with other families in the neighboring countries, and thus environmental causes of the disease were removed. Only the excited mental cases were kept in mental institutions. Pinel, who removed the manacles from the insane in France, declared that Spain was the country that used the best and most humane treatment of the insane. The asylum at Saragossa, founded in 1425 A. D. for "the diseased in mind of the nation" showed what we call our modern recognition of the need to be gentle and kind with the mentally sick.

When France turned the care of her insane asylums over to the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, there was established a system of colonies in the rural districts, to which patients were sent during their quiet periods, and during this time they were kept at work. During their excited periods they were returned to the central asylum for treatment. It was only in the beginning of what is termed the humane treatment of the insane (the eighteenth century) that we find real abuses.

From the earliest Christian times there was special solicitude for the foundling and the orphan. The Church was the first to condemn the practise of infanticide among the pagans. The saving of these infants was at first an individual practise, but later they were adopted into Christian families. Although mention is made of foundling asylums in the seventh century at Trier, the first of which there is authentic record was established at Milan by Datheus in 787 A. D.

In the Apostolic Constitution "orphans as well as widows are commended to Christian love. The Bishop is to have the orphans brought up at the expense of the Church, and to take care that the girls be given, when of marriageable age, to Christian husbands, and that boys learn some art of handicraft, and later provided with tools and placed in a condition to earn their living, so that they may be no longer than necessary a burden to the Church." Thus we see the early advocacy of vocational training.

In the Church's care of the orphans, St. Vincent de Paul stands out as a notable figure. After the war between France and Austria, he gathered together more than 1,000 orphans from three towns, and they were all under the age of seven. When the Revolution broke out in France, the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul had 426 houses of benevolence, the greatest number of them caring for orphans.

One cannot pass the early days of the Church in social service without mentioning the leper. It was the care, quarantine and strict legislation of the Church that reduced leprosy from a common disease in the beginning to a rare one at the end of the seventeenth century. It is true that not so much was done medically but we find care and humane treatment. It was a rule of the Church that first forbade the leper to marry.

We find the rules and laws for the care of the lepers issued by the different Popes from Gregory II to Boniface. We find Pipin in 757 A. D., and Charlemagne in 789 A. D. erecting hospitals for the lepers at Verdun, Metz and Maastricht. In St. Gall, in the eighth century. Innisfallen, Ireland, in 869 A. D., and in England in 950 A. D., hospitals were erected for the same purpose. Even in our own day, Father Damien, whose life was sacrificed

at Molokai for the betterment of lepers, will ever stand out as a true social sacrifice.

In the year 1617 St. Vincent de Paul began the foundation of modern social service, and is regarded as the father of it. Starting with his Ladies of Charity, St. Vincent de Paul founded no less than thirty social service Sodalities, including the Sisters of Charity who today in New York alone conduct twenty-five hospitals, twelve orphan asylums, three foundling asylums, and one hospital for mental cases. There are in the United States 3,864 women who have given up their lives to the cause of social service, serving without pay.

For thirty-four years St. Vincent de Paul gave no rule. In charity he was a revolutionist, for when Rome ordered all nuns cloistered, he replied: "For monastery the Sisters of Charity are to have the houses of the sick; for cell, a hired room; for chapel, the parish church; for cloister the streets of the city and the wards of the hospital; for enclosure, obedience; for grating, the fear of God; for veil, holy modesty." Thus one of the most daring and fruitful apostolates was inaugurated, and only God knows the record of the social service of these women for the past three centuries.

When St. Lazare, the home for idiots, was given to St. Vincent de Paul, for a head house, for his community, he insisted on keeping the idiots, too. He refused to permit them to be disturbed. Prior to this time the Augustinian Fathers had charge of the mental defectives.

Most of the rules of the present day social service are patterned after the rule of St. Vincent de Paul. He used to say to the community at St. Lazare, "My children, the poor are our heritage. What an honor!" His system was to allow abundant room and time for growth, expansion and initiative. He distrusted rigid framework, with cut and dried rules. He preferred the slower and better lesson, experience.

In 1633 he founded the nursing Sisters of Charity, who were to play so important a role on the battlefields of the unfortunate seventeenth century. They, who were so often called "Angels of the Battlefield," were the first Red Cross nurses. They did heroic work on our battlefields, but it was only in 1918 that our Congress voted

permission for a monument to be erected in Washington as a tribute to the Sisters who served on the field of the Civil War.

The civilization of pagan Germany was accomplished through the social service work of the Benedictines. While the Church condemns the theology of Franz X. Von Baader of Germany, his principles of sociology as set forth at Munich, 1765, are sound.

The law of love for God and neighbor is the unitive principle of all social existence, liberty and equality; as opposite principles of self-love is the note of all disunion, slavery and despotism. God is the all binding source of all law, from him is all social authority.

Likewise Rosmini Serbate, an Italian, who founded the Fathers of Charity, is condemned for his philosophy, but yet the community still flourishes as an active social service agent of charity.

In the work of Vivis (1526), we find all the fundamental principles of every sound system of relief that has been in existence, and it might be added that they were not due to the Reformation, but to the intellectual revival which preceded it, and would have been more fruitful had their application not been hindered by the social, religious and political disturbances for which the Reformation was responsible.

The great decline in the social service of the Church after the Reformation was due in some measure to the rapid decay of feudalism and to the agrarian changes; but in great measure to the confiscation of the monastic and other sources of Catholic charity and to the substitution of extortionate secular landlords of monasteries and the churches. In other words, in those days as in our own, the profiteering landlord had to be contended with.

As the result of the Reformation, the relief of the poor fell more and more to the civil authorities, national, provincial and municipal. Municipal poor relief did not, however, originate with the Reformation; it had been quite general in the fifteenth century, and it was Vivis who declared that it was the duty of the civic authorities to care for the needy. Among his most important recommendations are: that the census of the indigent be taken; that all who are able be compelled to work; that the authorities, if necessary, provide work; and that begging

be prohibited. In 1531 the proposals of Vivis were embodied in the law of the Emperor Charles V. The means for carrying out the law were to be provided by hospitals, foundations, and voluntary contributions.

In 1833 Frederic Ozanam and several other Catholic students in Paris organized the society of St. Vincent de Paul, today spread over the whole world, wherever a Catholic church is to be found. The Society does not confine its ministrations to direct material assistance, but maintains in many places nurseries, libraries, orphanages, schools and employment bureaus and strives everywhere to extend moral and religious aid and to encourage social service. Yet in proportion to its resources, it is probably one of the most effective of all the associations for social service in existence today.

However, other Christian Churches have not been lax in coming forward with social service agencies, and we have today well organized agencies under the auspices of Episcopal, Baptist and other denominations. The Jewish social service organizations and their good work are too well known to need any word of commendation on my part, and it appears to the writer that all of the well established churches are today making every endeavor to provide adequate social service wherever required. It seems to the writer that the association of religion and social service both from a humane and religious standpoint is a natural one, and that whenever a religious motive comes with social service it makes for better aid to the individual who needs it.

Many of our non-sectarian organizations treat the giving of alms as a businesslike proposition without any of the sympathy that should go with it. That charity should be administered in a businesslike way and after a full investigation is admitted. But the giving of alms without the spirit which should attend it, is a condition which is to be deplored.

There is a strong line of demarcation between social service within and without the religious sphere. Social service without is secular philanthropy beginning and ending with man. In the religious social service, it begins with God and flows down to the people. Its mainspring is love of God, which does not make it less effectual or

less congenial to those who are helped. Something more, than philanthropy has held these people through all the ages steadily to their work, and it is this: that sociology is not separable from religion; that Christ is the Master of our religion and our social service.

Today the materialistic theory of life, according to which the supreme good is abundant and diversified satisfaction of the senses, has produced an immense increase of self-love and of selfishness and a profound decrease of love of God and effective love of our neighbor. While these deplorable conditions have been most general among persons who profess no religion, they have seriously affected a large proportion of the religious population. The question before us today is not so much one of military disarmament as one of moral disarmament, and any limitation or disuse of material weapons must be preceded by an alteration in the moral fabric of society today. Covenants, no matter how carefully arrived at, can never control the scheming intellect. Greed and envy must give way to a just and generous regard to the interest and rights of others, if personal, national and international relations are to be happy, harmonious and materially helpful.

When charity, the greatest of all virtues reigns in the souls of men, we may expect among the peoples of the earth not merely a league of nations, but a universal family of loving members, because then there will be neither Jew nor Gentile, Greek nor Roman, bond nor free. We shall all be one in Jesus Christ.

America's Fifty Million Morons

MYLES E. CONNOLLY

THE alleged large number of morons in the United States still continues to cause much varied discussion. During the war the psychological department of the United States Army tested over 1,700,000 recruits to determine, if possible, their level of intelligence. In the official publication of the results, issued from the office of the Surgeon-General, the editor, Professor Robert M. Yerxes, writes:

We know now, approximately from clinical experience, the capacity and mental ability of a man of 13 years' mental age. We have never heretofore supposed the mental ability of this man was the average of the country or anywhere near it. A moron has been defined as any one with a mental age from 7 to 12 years. If this definition is interpreted as meaning any one with a mental age less than 13 years, as has been recently done, then almost half of the white draft (47.3 per cent.) would have been morons. Thus it appears that feeble-mindedness, as at present defined, is of much greater frequency of occurrence than had been originally supposed.

Taking these figures as a basis it is argued that about 50,000,000 Americans are morons. This, however, is not all. The theory of mental levels, if applied, adds a new significance to these figures. Writes Dr. H. H. Goddard:

The theory of mental levels holds that every human being comes into the world with a potentiality for mental development that will carry him just so far, and that, barring those accidents that may stop a person from reaching the development which would have been normal to him, nothing can, to any great extent, affect the mental level to which he will finally attain. ("Human Efficiency and Levels of Intelligence," pp. 6, 7.)

In other words, heredity is the great determinant of the mental level. Statistics, it is argued further, prove that "the subnormal man reproduces more rapidly," and hence Professor Edwin G. Conklin, of Princeton, declares:

When it is remembered that mental capacity is inherited, that parents of low intelligence generally produce children of low intelligence, and that on the average they have more children

than people of high intelligence, and, furthermore, when we consider that the intellectual capacity or "mental age" can be changed very little by education, we are in a position to appreciate the very serious condition which confronts us as a nation. ("The Direction of Human Evolution," p. 103.)

So serious does Professor William McDougall, of Harvard, consider this condition that he begins his book, "Is America Safe for Democracy?" with this very startling sentence: "As I watch the American nation speeding gaily, with invincible optimism, down the road to destruction I seem to be contemplating the greatest tragedy in the history of mankind." Some, indeed, already see America gone to the dogs—those dogs that have hounded the march of every great civilization through time.

The discussion of the army reports is carried on, roughly speaking, by two parties: those who accept the army figures and those who do not accept them.

Those who deny the reliability of the figures declare that the intelligence test, because of the "human element," is generally inaccurate. Furthermore, they point out, the tests were given hastily during a time of emotional strain when they were taken too seriously or not seriously enough.

Those who accept the figures are divided roughly into two classes: those who interpret them as indicating the presence of widespread feeble-mindedness, even to the extent considered by Professors McDougall and Conklin; and those who refuse to honor them with any such serious interpretation. These latter assert that the figures do not allow any nationwide interpretation because they apply only to the country's *healthy* young men, who, it is argued, are not the most intelligent young men, and because the figures necessarily neglect the women of the country.

Those who interpret the figures as meaning that forty-seven per cent. of the country's population is composed of morons propose, as remedies for this condition, eugenics or education, or both. The discussion of those who advocate education is hampered by their failure to prove that education can raise the level of intelligence to any great extent. The discussion of those who advocate

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eugenics is hampered, outside of the omission of ethical considerations, by their failure to compile sufficient statistics to prove the general applicability of the theory of mental levels or the benefits of the selective breeding they suggest.

The subject has invited the usual injection of cynicism, not altogether without antitoxic virtue. It has been suggested that, in view of the supposition that democracy is built upon the majority, no one should be wroth over the futility of both Democrats and Republicans. H. L. Mencken writes:

For fifteen or twenty years I have been a regular reader of the *Congressional Record*. What I now propose is that the members of the House of Representatives submit themselves to the same test that one of their laws forced upon poor conscripts. If the ensuing report of the psychologists shows less than 50 per cent. of morons I engage myself to go to Washington at my own expense, crawl on hands and knees all the way from the New Willard to the Capitol, and there remain kneeling in contrite prayer and meditation for the space of one calendar week.

It has been further suggested that if it is true, as alleged, that the average reader is a moron the mystery of the persistent asininity of many big newspapers is at once solved.

I for one must confess that I have found slightly frivolous contributions to the discussion highly refreshing. The whole tone of the disputation has been of tragic seriousness. For once it becomes very clear that the modern psychologist and sociologist measure a man only by the scale of his intelligence. They approach the problem with dark fears for the intelligence of the races of the future. This hysterical concern is strained enough, but when it insists on omitting the fact that a man of vast intelligence devoted to evil is less desirable than a man of lesser intelligence devoted to good the concern becomes, for me at any rate, quite unbearable. I do not object to a professor designating some 50,000,000 of the country's inhabitants as morons; but I do object, though my objection may be worth little, to a professor condemning 50,000,000 of the country's inhabitants merely by calling them a bad name.

To be intelligent is not to be good. A high mental level makes for nobility no more than coronets or Norman blood. Kind hearts and simple faith are every bit as desirable as they were in the poet's day. Consider it as you may, a moral faculty is not the exclusive possession of the few who are loftily intelligent. Conscience can make cowards of us all.

Man, furthermore, has freedom of will. The modern psychologist must, it appears, overrate the intelligence, and underrate, if not ignore, free will in his classification of man. It has never occurred to him that very possibly it is a weak-willed, high intelligence that can pave hell with good intentions. Indeed, it is largely because of this omission in his philosophy that he never considers hell at all.

Most "physiological psychologists" agree with William James that it is best to "ignore the free-will question in psychology." Not all of them, however. Dr. McDougall, already quoted, is one of the least prejudiced of living psychologists. At times he gives one hope that wide-visioned psychology may ultimately achieve a sensible synthesis of the numerous activities of science. Witness his "Body and Mind," that painstaking consideration in favor of Animism, in the introduction to which he has written:

I am aware that, to many minds, it must appear nothing short of a scandal that any one occupying a position in an academy of learning, other than a Roman Catholic seminary, should in this twentieth century defend the old-world notion of the soul of man. (p. xi, edition 1920.)

And yet Dr. McDougall has written of the freedom of the will: "The fuller becomes our insight into the springs of human conduct the more impossible does it become to maintain this antiquated doctrine." ("Social Psychology," p. 14, edition 1921.)

In view of the disregard of any consideration of the freedom of the will, or the denial of it altogether, there is no reason to wonder at the current, popular acceptance of the doctrine that crime is largely due to feeble-mindedness. Objectors to this doctrine have helped strengthen its position by merely pointing out, in reply, that some

criminals have been men of superior intelligence. This is hardly an answer. The proponents of the doctrine declare that criminals of high intelligence are the exceptions, and that "if we could get at the facts we would find these few also were to be explained without recourse to the doctrine of original sin."

The doctrine that feeble-mindedness is largely the cause of crime is based on the observations and statistics of investigators which are interpreted to show that upwards of 80 per cent. of inmates of jails and similar institutions are persons of low intelligence.

Every investigation of the mentality of criminals, misdemeanants, delinquents and other anti-social groups [writes Dr H. H. Goddard, "Human Efficiency and Levels of Intelligence," p. 72] has proved beyond the possibility of contradiction that nearly all persons in these classes and in some cases all are of low mentality. Moreover, a large percentage of all the groups are of such low mentality as to be properly denominated feeble-minded.

It is about time that some one made it clear to thinkers of this group that, because a large percentage of wrong-doers in custody are of inferior mentality, it does not follow that low intelligence is the great cause of crime. It means that the offender of inferior intelligence is apprehended more often than his more intelligent brother. It means that the clumsiest criminal lands most often in jail.

All wrong-doers are not in confinement, or even under observation. The intelligence test put to the men in stripes indicates little as to the real extent of the evil in our civilization. The poor wrong-doer, the obvious, the weak-hearted, the powerless wrong-doer, usually is taken into custody. But many a murderer and thief on a vast scale sits in ease and security. Many a bland villain who has ground human bodies and souls in the machine of his rapacity sits undisturbedly as a pillar of this much-vaunted present order of things. One seldom questions the intelligence of these men. The fact that many criminals in jail are feeble-minded proves simply that many feeble-minded criminals land in jail.

In the discussion of the number of morons in the coun-

try some lamentation is undoubtedly fitting. The part of intelligence, however, has been highly overrated. Before tears are shed one should take care to see that conclusions rest on a consideration of the whole man. One does not need intelligence tests to show that the path of mankind is always unsatisfactory and often tragic.

The median man is not so deficient as that ill-sounding term *moron* would incline one to believe. The intelligence test is designed to determine little more than "the potentiality of the machine." It omitted a number of factors that play no small part in successful living. It did not measure man's power of attention, a very valuable asset, enabling a man, as it often does, to make much out of a little. It did not test his memory, another valuable asset, especially in a world that is so insistent in its demands for knowledge. This memory is also very useful in helping the median man to recall those numerous occasions in history in which he was treated in no considerate manner by oligarchies of those of superior intelligence. He has usually some imagination which affords him the comfort, small enough, of odd glimpses of what can and may be. He has also, very often, a sense of humor which saves him from (among other errors) taking some scientists too seriously. And then, as I said before, he has a conscience and a free will.

Men of superior intelligence have never been particularly marked for their high morals or general nobility. If heredity is the determinant of their ultimate high level of intelligence then such men surely can claim but small glory for themselves. Great praise is not theirs, but great responsibility. Their chances for entering heaven resemble the rich man's. Many lofty perceptions and moral negligence cannot be favorably compared to one ideal and the ability to carry it out. Actions speak more loudly than thoughts. St. John of the Cross, knowing that in the will lay the test of love—and what is greater than love?—wrote long ago: "All visions, revelations, and heavenly feelings, and whatever else is greater than these, are not worth the least act of humility." And again: "They alone attain to the Divine wisdom who, like little

children and ignorant ones, lay aside their own wisdom, and serve God in love."

Indeed, the saintly mystic went immensely further when he wrote: "It is a singular grace from God when he so darkens and impoverishes the soul as to leave in it nothing which can lead it astray," a thought that is above the superior intelligence of the modern sociologist.

It is curious that no psychologist, even in a discussion as serious as this discussion of the "moron evil" is, ever stops to ponder the doctrine of the Fall of Man. All are determined, as the investigator quoted above, to explain everything "without recourse to the doctrine of original sin." And yet the facts of this discussion show clearly that man, for better or worse, is not following the rule-book. He is not maintaining his own in the manner of leopards, giraffes, elephants and other members of brute creation. For level consistency the gorilla has driven him to shame. I do not know how many scientists still believe in the wisdom of nature, in the genius of natural selection. If there are any the present widespread lack of intelligence is a rather ironical commentary on their belief. If man is to be considered simply as a physical achievement, then simply as a physical achievement he is not a figure that would move one to great pride. The working of materialistic evolution is too obviously unfortunate for its reputed sagacity. Blind nature is certainly blind.

When I say that it is obvious that man is not following the rule-book I do not mean merely that he is not evolving. I do not mean that he is devolving. I mean that it is more obvious than ever that he is an anomaly. He is an exception. Material science may explain the wasp with a satisfactory approach to perfection; but man is too much for material science. Any explanation of him must contain an element of the extra-mundane. It is this element in the explanation that scientists call extravagant and preposterous. What they mean is simply that it is extra-mundane.

Poor man with his darkened intellect and weakened will! He is pathological. He is an eccentric. As Chesterton maintains, if he is not a divine being that fell he is

an animal gone entirely off his head. He is beyond the slide-rule. The intelligence test cannot fasten him down. His mad whims, his neuroses, his curious cravings, his internal conflicts, clashes of instinct and reason, are a puzzle. The key to it lies in the Garden of Eden. If as Leslie Walker claims, science has rediscovered the fall she is keeping it a dark secret. I, at least, have not heard her mention Adam's sin.

Papal Approval of the Vincentians

*Letter of His Holiness Pius XI to Vicomte Louis d' Hendecourt,
President-General of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.*

Beloved Son, Health and Apostolic Blessing.

We have received with great pleasure the address which the worthy President and the members of the Council-General of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul presented to Us on the occasion of our elevation to the See of St. Peter.

It has been our good fortune for many years past to be very closely acquainted with the activities of the Brothers of St. Vincent de Paul, to appreciate their zeal, their devotion to the Holy See, the supernatural spirit which animates their works, and to witness the abundant fruits of their apostolate. We have also had the happiness on many occasions of manifesting the fatherly interest which We take in your conferences. Consequently, We could not but receive with particular satisfaction the homage of the filial sentiments and good wishes which you desired to offer Us, together with the profession of your profound attachment to this Apostolic See.

Your letter also drew up before our eyes a picture of the present condition of your works. Your conferences naturally felt the consequences of the great catastrophe which has shaken Europe; but We know with what devotion you have undertaken to restore your impoverished and stricken works, and to set them on foot again in their old vigor and prosperity. It was consoling to Our heart to learn that, with the help of God, this work of restoration is at present in course of accomplishment, and that the

charity of your brothers through the entire world has enabled you to distribute abundant help to the countries which have suffered most from the war. The two hundred and thirty new conferences, which your society has had aggregated to itself in the course of the year 1921, is evidence of its vitality and fruitfulness.

Whilst giving thanks to God for the results obtained, We are happy to address to you, beloved son, as well as to your fellow-workers, our cordial congratulations for the zeal you display in spreading abroad this work, so necessary at the present moment, and in extending everywhere its salutary influence. We ask of our divine Saviour to continue to pour out the abundance of His graces on this institution, which draws from the furnace of His charitable heart the secret of its generous self-sacrifice, to continue to bless your apostolate of charity in the immense needs of the present time. As a pledge of these favors, We affectionately grant to you, beloved son, to the members of the Council-General, as well as to all the brothers of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, to your benefactors and to your works, the Apostolic blessing.

Rome, from the Vatican, April 5, 1922, in the first year of our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

On receipt of this letter the President-General of the Supreme Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul wrote as follows to Vincentians throughout the world:

All our brothers will receive with respectful gratitude this evidence of the paternal interest which the Holy Father takes in our society. They will also read with pleasure the note of our dear and venerated Cardinal Protector, which accompanied the letter of His Holiness:

Rome, Palace of the Datory,
April 9, 1922.

Dear President-General:

The Holy Father confers on me the great honor of being his intermediary to communicate to you the beautiful autograph letter which you will find enclosed.

This reply to the filial address of the Council-General will be a consolation and a fresh encouragement for all the

brothers. May it increase also the number of those who take an interest in the holy work of the conferences!

You well know, Mr. President-General, that the Cardinal Protector is the first to rejoice at this high mark of esteem which the Holy Father has just given to the society at the beginning of his Pontificate.

Please accept, together with my congratulations, the expression of my devoted good wishes in Our Lord.

VINCENT CARDINAL VANNUTELLI.

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